

## **Section 1 - Plan Summary**

### **Stated Purpose**

- Inventory conservation and recreation resources
- Determine regional open space goals and objectives
- Develop timetable to accomplish objectives

### **Stated Goals**

1. Protect open space and preserve scenic character through
  - a. Land acquisition
    - i. Along Otter River
    - ii. Within Watershed Protection Zone
  - b. Local ordinances
  - c. Inter-municipal cooperation
2. Improve and expand recreational resource facilities
  - a. Existing Bike Trail system expansion
  - b. Municipal Golf Course improvements
  - c. Little League field
  - d. Parker Pond restoration
  - e. Increase accessibility to local ponds
3. Protect supplies and improve quality of water resources
  - a. Watershed protection
  - b. Wasa Street drain Rehabilitation
  - c. Otter River greenway project
4. Accommodate environment friendly new growth
  - a. Encourage responsible development
    - i. Housing
    - ii. Industrial
5. Increase public awareness to protect natural resources
  - a. Particularly water quality

## **Section 2 - Introduction**

### **A. Statement of Purpose**

1. Recognize accelerating growth
2. Assess status of resources
3. Propose a five-year strategy
4. Conform to requirements of Division of Conservation Services
5. Plan will guide City's budget, boards, and commissions
6. Plan represents the City's commitment to open space

### **B. Planning Process and Public Participation**

1. Department of Community Development and Planning
  - a. Lead the effort
2. Open Space and Recreation Steering Committee
  - a. Monthly meetings Oct – Mar (6 mo)
  - b. Work groups met more frequently

- c. Prepared and distributed a survey
    - i. Received 26 responses
  - d. Public meeting to share results and receive input
    - i. 17 people in attendance
- 3. Participation from City Officials
- 4. Conducted a Public Hearing
  - a. Presented the Plan
  - b. Endorsed by Planning Board and Conservation Commission

### **Section 3 - Community Setting**

- A. Regional Context
- B. Population Characteristics
- C. Growth and Development Patterns

### **Section 4 - Environmental Inventory & Analysis**

- A. Geology, Soils and Topography
- B. Landscape Character
- C. Water Resources
- D. Vegetation
- E. Fisheries and Wildlife
- F. Scenic and Unique Environments
- G. Environmental Problems

### **Section 5 - Inventory of Conservation and Recreation Land**

### **Section 6 - Community Goals**

- A. Description of Process
- B. Statement of Goals
- C. Handicap Accessibility Opportunities

### **Section 7 - Analysis of Needs**

#### **A. Resource Protection Needs**

- 1. Care for current open space
- 2. Protect and acquire additional open space
- 3. Protect water resources
- 4. Preserve historic and scenic character

#### **B. Community Needs**

- 1. Maintain, improve, expand, parks and playgrounds
- 2. Restore Park Pond for boating, fishing, swimming
- 3. Complete North Central Pathway
- 4. Build new Little League and soccer field's
- 5. Improve recreational access on Otter River to Templeton
- 6. Improve Municipal Golf Course including Sewer Extension
- 7. Upgrade indoor swimming facilities
- 8. Create access to Lake Wampanoag and Wright's Reservoir

#### **C. Management Needs**

1. Additional Conservation Lands management staffing
2. Outreach to schools and public
3. Otter River Corridor protection

## **Section 8 - Goals and Objectives**

### **Goal 1 -Protect open space and preserve scenic character**

- a. Encourage cluster zoning
- b. Adopt Scenic Roadway ordinance
- c. Identify undeveloped land parcels for city purchase
- d. Identify alternatives to development of privately owned open space parcels
- e. Shared rural driveways
- f. Irregular shaped lot zoning
- g. Improve Zoning Ordinance
- h. Neo-traditional and mixed use subdivisions

### **Goal 2 – Improve and expand recreational resource facilities**

- a. Complete bike path trail
- b. Improve city parks and playground maintenance
- c. New playground
- d. Improve Otter River boat access and hiking trails
- e. Upgrade Municipal Golf Course
- f. Improve Parker Pond access
- g. Lake Wampanoag and Wright Pond access
- h. New little league complex
- i. New soccer fields
- j. Upgrade Greenwood pool facilities

### **Goal 3 - Protect & Improve water quality resources**

- a. Wetland protection
- b. Ratify multi-town agreement
- c. Restore Parker Pond depth
- d. Enforce watershed protection
- e. “Reduced Salt” policy
- f. Acquire open space within watershed
- g. Improve storm-water management
- h. Improve non-point source pollution

### **Goal 4 – Accommodate new growth where environment can best support it**

- a. Promote mixed use development
- b. Promote infill development
- c. Encourage use, coverage, effectiveness of Development Overlay District
- d. Support redevelopment of Brownfield sites
- e. Encourage cluster zoning

### **Goal 5 – Increase public awareness**

- a. Promote land donations to protect open space
- b. Engage public in open space decisions
- c. Educate public about open space, wetlands, and water quality
- d. Improve access to open space and informational material

## **Section 9 – Five-Year Action Plan**

**Year One -2000**

- a. Design and bid sewer extension to Municipal golf course
  - *Status = Complete*
- b. Acquire land for NCP link to Winchendon
  - *Complete*
- c. Complete design of next 3-miles of bike path
  - *Complete*
- d. Handicap accessible Greenway concept plan along Otter River with Templeton
  - *Complete*
- e. Acquire Greenway parcels
  - *Some properties acquired*
- f. Assess, design, and permit Parker Pond restoration
  - *Project stalled when couldn't find disposal site for dredging*
- g. Design Parker Pond Dam safety project
  - *Complete*
- h. Design Wasa Street drain project
  - *Complete*
- i. Seek inter-municipal agreements to protect watershed
  - *Had meetings but were not productive*
- j. Review Zoning Ordinance and apply growth management tools
  - *Complete*

**Year Two -2001**

- a. Complete extension of sewer service to golf course
  - *Complete*
- b. Bid and construct 3-miles of bike path
  - *Complete*
- c. Support Winchendon's bike path efforts
  -
- d. Increase parks and grounds municipal maintenance budget
  -
- e. Adopt growth management amendments to Zoning Ordinance
  - *In Process*
- f. Adopt scenic roads ordinance
  - *Approved by Planning Board. No action taken by City Council*
- g. Adopt reduced salt ordinance
  - *Not done*
- h. Plan, specify, and permit Parker Pond restoration project
  - *Aborted*
- i. Draw down Parker Pond
  - *Partial*
- j. Identify and prioritize Open Space land parcels for acquisition
  - *Complete*
- k. Ratify inter-municipal watershed and open space agreements along town boundaries
  - *Not done*

## 2000 – 2005 Open Space and Recreation Plan Summary

- l. Establish GIS capability
  - *In process. Engineer hired to develop in-house capability.*
- m. Upgrade Conservation Agent to full time
  - *Not done*
- n. Solicit Land Trusts help to promote public awareness of donating and restricting land for Open Space use.
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### **Year Three – 2002**

- Adopt local wetland ordinance
  - *Done*
- Acquire additional parcels along Greenway
  - *Some parcels acquired (includes Snake Pond)*
- Complete Parker Pond restoration
  - *Aborted*
- Complete Parker Pond Dam safety project
  - *Done*
- Complete Wasa Street drainage project
  - *Done but new problems identified*
- Complete new little league field complex with soccer field
  - *Incomplete. Location identified. Need funding.*
- Access to Lake Wampanoag
  - *Not done*
- Increase budget for storm water management
  - *Not done but use NCCI prisoners to provide labor*
- Complete restoration to Greenwood Pool
  - *Design complete. Work scheduled for FY2006*

### **Year Four – 2003**

- Prepare handicap accessible playground concept plan
  - Complete*
- Complete access to Lake Wampanoag project
  - *Not done*
- Design, permit, construct improved Greenway access
  - *Properties acquired but construction not done*
- Support Winchendon to complete bike path link
  -
- Concept plan for Wright's Reservoir access
  - *Not done*
- Acquire right of way easement from B&M
  - *Not done. Parcel no longer available*

### **Year Five – 2004**

- Complete construction of new playground
  - *Not done*
- Acquire additional open space parcels
  - *Racette property adjacent to Oliver Case playground*

## 2000 – 2005 Open Space and Recreation Plan Summary

- *Betty Spring sub divisions.*

Solicit Land Trusts help to promote public awareness of donating and restricting land for Open Space use

- *Not done*

Complete bike path connection to Dunn Pond

- *Not complete but a plan with partial funding is in place*

Update Open Space and Recreation Plan

- *Not done!*

Complete improved access to Wright's Reservoir

- Not done